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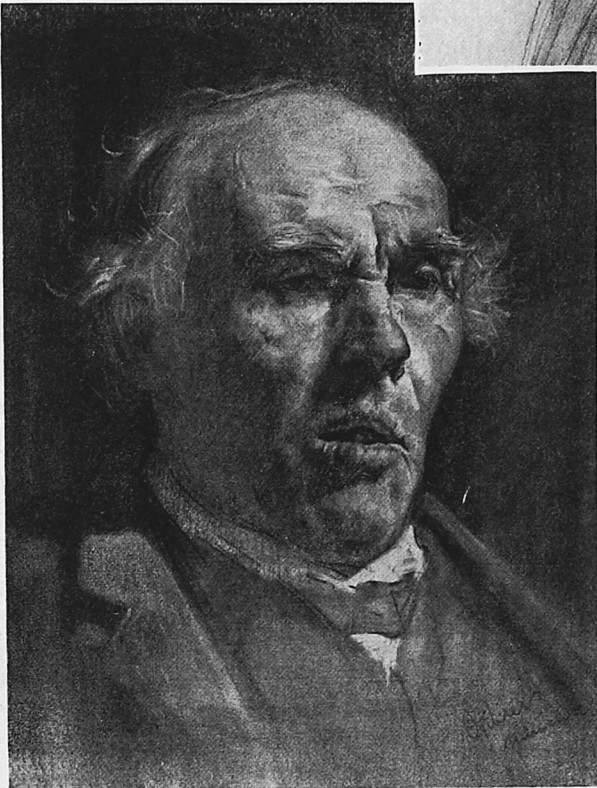
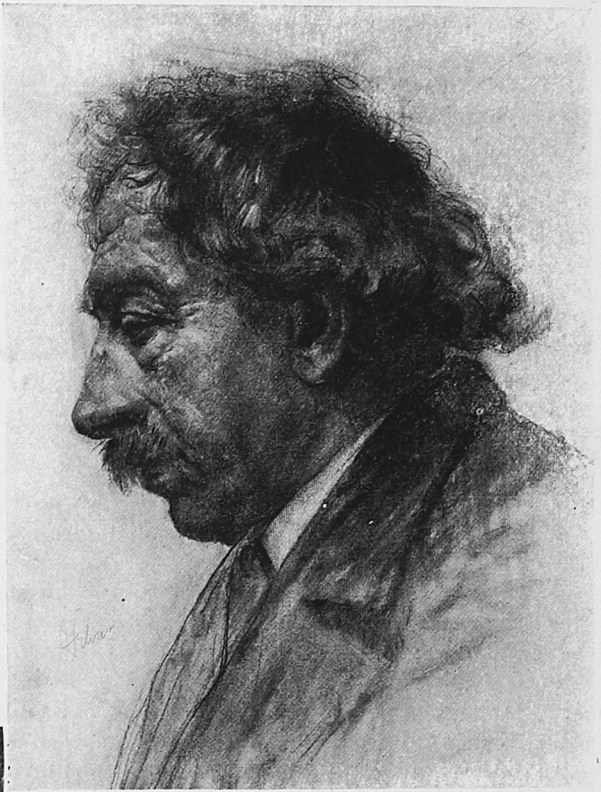
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OSCAR FEHRER'S CHARCOAL DRAWINGS

LALANNE, Allonge and Michalet were all masters of charcoal. Leon Lhermitte, the figure painter, made a reputation in this medium alone, and there were few of the great painters of the past who did not avail themselves of the charcoal "stick."

Of all the black and white processes, charcoal is the nearest approach to painting in giving sympathetic expression to the artist's mood. In this medium *mass* and *light* and *shade* can be reproduced in an infinite variety of tones. Its luminous grays, the crumbling contours of its lines make possible the rendering of every variety of texture and surface. It is the ideal medium with which to solve the problems of



chiaroscuro, and to prove the æsthetic value of the subordination of line to mass.

Ivon, in 1847, was the first to popularize this medium, as before his time the stick was used only in combination with chalk. In these later days we find charcoal not only in the student's kit, but it is also of the greatest value to the creative artist, as with it he is enabled in a white heat to record a new-born idea, while the fugitive character of the medium renders possible infinite modification, addition and correction.

Oscar Fehrer, a New York portrait painter of excellent parts, has always loved the charming effects which can be produced by charcoal in outlining flesh tints, high lights, and the broad effects of light and shade. Ever

The Collector and Art Critic

a student, he has delighted year after year to transfix upon charcoal paper human types that appealed to him during his trips abroad. True, charcoal is often looked upon with scorn by painters who think themselves too great to use anything but oil—but are not great enough to produce anything worth while in any medium; Fehrer, however, has shown in a score or more of his drawings of character heads that his hobby is a serious undertaking, and that a skillful use of this medium can lead a man far into a certain perfection of drawing impossible with oil.

The two typical heads, here reproduced, are only samples of many which I have examined of equal strength and charm.

The artist's keen character drawing is easily admitted. The old French *auberge* keeper is just such a type as is seen sitting on the bench outside the door of his inn, holding forth on the political questions of the day. The German music master is also a strong type of his class and delightfully true.

There is a vibration, a sparkle, a luminosity in the darks, and a tonal shading in the lights which add a fullness and a solidity to these drawings that is almost sculpturesque.

The collection should be shown at some gallery this season. It is of more value than the average exhibition of oil paintings in gold frames.

A New Scheme for Bridge Approaches in New York

Mr. Charles R. Lamb, president of the Municipal Art Society, has raised an interesting point with regard to the approach to the new Blackwell's Island bridge from the Manhattan side, by citing the excess condemnation law in force in England, whereby London is now being beautified architecturally at no cost to the city whatever. He says; "This 'excess condemnation law' permits the city of London to take more than the amount of land needed for a public improvement. They are now laying out the King's Highway, which will run from the Strand at the New Law Courts to High Holborn, and be as handsome a course as there is in all Europe.

"The improvement will not cost London one penny, for under the new law the city has taken over some thirty odd streets and squares, which will not only

include the proposed King's Highway, but bound it on either side. The abutting land is being resold, and the increased value of the land pays the whole cost of the improvement.

"The proposed taking of one hundred feet along the west side of Second avenue between Fifty-eighth and Sixty-first streets, and the demolition of the entire block through to Third avenue, between Fifty-ninth and Sixtieth streets, does not solve the problem at all. What is needed is an outlet for the travel which must necessarily come as the city grows, else the present disgraceful conditions at the Brooklyn Bridge will be repeated uptown on an even greater scale."

Mr. Lamb favors the widening of Fifty-ninth street through to Fifth avenue and his suggestion of how to do it is worthy of careful study.

Impressionism in the Fifteenth Century

Vasari, the contemporary and friend of Michael Angelo, in his "Stories of Italian Artists," says of Titian: "His method of working on his last pictures is very different from that of his youth. For his first works were finished with great diligence and might be looked at near or

far, but his last are worked with great patches of color, so that they cannot be seen near, but at a distance they look perfect. Many think they are done without any trouble, but this is not true. And this way of working is most judicious, for it makes the picture seem living."